



October 19, 2017

In the Matter of:

Wireline Competition Bureau Seeking Comments on E-rate Category Two

WC Docket No. 13-184

We are pleased to be able to provide input on the impact of having access to secure and sufficient funding for our library WiFi and internal connections. Before the E-rate Modernization in 2014, virtually no libraries received funds for then, Priority 2 services. USAC data shows that most libraries are eligible for a 70% discount or less and according to the American Library Association, many libraries stopped bothering to apply for WiFi funding. Some states have reported that none of their libraries have received WiFi funds since the beginning of the E-rate program. Our community members have greatly benefitted from the 2014 Modernization as it's allowed us to improve the WiFi capability in each library branch.

Our libraries, as in communities across the country, people turn to the library to use our WiFi on their tablets, laptops, and other devices. Library users are downloading job applications, applying for financial aid, seeking health information, and communicating with family - all dependent on a strong WiFi signal.

We have hundreds of students using our library every day for school work because, although the school district provides laptops for them, an estimated 28% of the students in this district have no WiFi at home. After school, the library is the only place in our community where students are free to gather and use the WiFi when they need it most. Libraries everywhere know WiFi throughout the library is not a "nice to have" - it's a core community service.

With the commitment of the FCC to ensure a library budget of \$2.30 (\$5.00 for a selected category of larger urban and suburban libraries) per square foot, libraries can finally upgrade outdated equipment or plan for new construction. They have confidence that desperately needed support will be there.

Please maintain secure funding through the full five year budget period as adopted during the 2014 Modernization. Our communities depend on that funding.

Sincerely,

Amber Kent
Library Manager